

Western Oregon Plan Revision Comment

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Dear Bureau of Land Management,

I am opposed to the proposed alternatives of the Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) and especially disagree with the preferred alternative. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has done important work for this nation. However, the WOPR is a major step backward in the development of sound resource management practices for the forests of the Northwestern US. Fundamentally, it is clear that private interests cannot be allowed to influence the policies of the BLM regarding a resource that is not only common to the people of the US, but also to the people of the world and the societies of the future.

It is well known that the WOPR is the result of a dubious legal settlement between the timber industry and the Bush administration. The WOPR preferred alternative will designate a vast amount of public forest land in Josephine and other counties as matrix. Such liberal management will destroy delicate ecosystems, damage riparian zones, reduce property values, and destroy an invaluable resource, while a few industry leaders will gain momentary large profits. This is unthinkable in the current global context and contrary to the momentum of the US and world governments.

In the past year we have seen unprecedented awareness and action on climate change. The US has finally joined the world in a united convention on climate change and the presence of global warming is more popularly reported than ever before. Drought continues to overwhelm much of the US while flooding from unusual storm activity has become more frequent. While climate change recognized by the Department of Defense and a destabilizing force in the world and a threat to national security, it also weighs on the minds of the children in this country. At such a time as this, it is preposterous to recommend an increase in well-developed timber harvests.

This is not to say that the BLM is obsolete, but that I would prefer a focus on reforestation and afforestation and involvement in carbon sequestration aggregation. It is well known that old growth forests suffer less severe wild fires, while harvested areas are more prone to burning. If the BLM manages its forests in a manner that demonstrates stewardship and planning towards stable, well developed forests it will become eligible to participate in a carbon credit market as a seller. The tonnes of carbon sequestered by such a management plan must be studied in detail. Once identified they can be exchanged for cash in the carbon credit market. This market is a new one and can be expected to become more profitable as awareness of the greenhouse crisis in the Earth's climatic system increases.

Well developed forests are safer, promote more tourism, increase adjacent private property value, and will generally attract interest and capital to the area. Any revision to the Northwest Forest Plan needs to take into consideration the real value of what the forests in Oregon can be, both in emerging carbon markets and to locals and visitors alike. Given the alternatives presented, I therefore must wholeheartedly state that I do not support any of the presented alternatives and ask that the Northwest Forest Plan be modified in a constructive and profitable way based on a well-developed forest model.

Sincerely,

-- Daniel Dalegowski